

REVIEW: 'THE HUNGER GAMES' {page 13}

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NEW YORK
Wednesday, March 21, 2012



KEVIN C. DOWNS/METRO

THE WORLD WILL BE WATCHING

► Hundreds of fans camp out in Union Square to meet the stars of 'The Hunger Games'
► Tickets sold out for tomorrow's midnight premiere of the film

{page 02}

► Ameelina Sluka is one of hundreds who started waiting at 6 a.m. yesterday in Union Square for "The Hunger Games" autograph signing.

Metropolitik

US safety net ripped apart in GOP budget

► Health care, programs for poor take huge hits under Ryan proposal ► Meanwhile, wealthy get tax break {page 08}

Condo amenities more functional

Forget high luxury, these days the best extras a homebuyer can find are simple {page 26}



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Game for 'Hunger Games'

► New York the 'Capitol' for 'Hunger Games' madness ► Line stretches three blocks long in Union Square to see stars and author ► Tickets sold out a week in advance for premiere



KEVIN C. DOWNS/METRO

► These five fans started waiting at 6:30 a.m. yesterday outside the Barnes & Noble in Union Square.

'Game' on, NYC

Get your fill of "Hunger Games" events this week:

- **Thursday:** Theaters across the city will have midnight screenings. Cobble Hill Cinemas will also host a pre-screening party benefiting the Food Bank of New York where you can dress as your favorite character for the costume contest or win merchandise.
- **Saturday:** The Scholastic Store in SoHo will become a training center, like in the film, where "Tributes" learn skills to take into the arena. The event starts at 3 p.m.

- Buy "Hunger Games" jewelry on websites like Etsy, which feature a mockingjay brooch and pin (the signature token of the book's heroine), "Hunger Games"-themed fake nails and bags and T-shirts with the movie's stars and logo.

- Next time you get a manicure, ask your salon if they carry China Glaze nail polish; the Los Angeles-based polish company just released a line of "Capitol" colors for the film.

- And check out the new "Hunger Games" workout at New York Sports Club — see page 14 for more details.

ALISON BOWEN
and **KEVIN DOWNS**

In the news

Man's body found in LI

Police in Suffolk County are investigating the discovery of male human remains found in Commack yesterday morning. The decomposing remains were found at 8 a.m. in a wooded area near a condo complex. The remains appear to have been there for some time and police said the death does not appear to be criminal. No connection has been made to the ongoing search for the Gilgo Beach serial killer. **METRO/CB**

In the news



Teacher charged

Another city school teacher was arrested yesterday on sex abuse charges. Police said Esran Boothe, 49, was arrested and charged with forcible touching and sexual abuse. Boothe was a teacher at the Brooklyn Academy of Science and the Environment, but was reassigned away from the classroom after the alleged incident last week. **METRO/AB**

New York City is salivating for "The Hunger Games."

The first movie of the three-book series hits theaters Thursday night at midnight, and yesterday, hundreds of fans formed a line three blocks long outside the Union Square Barnes & Noble, where stars of the movie were due to arrive last night to sign autographs.

Cast members weren't scheduled to arrive until 8 p.m., but fans started camping out at 3 a.m. yesterday in order to be first in line.

They sat in lawn chairs, and lounged on blankets and sleeping bags in the unseasonably 70-degree weather, shaking with excitement. Ameelina France Sluka, 14, for example, started waiting outside the bookstore at 6:30 a.m. yesterday. "I have read every book,

"I am a big 'Hunger Games' fan, and I just want to meet the actors and tell them what they mean to us."

JULIA ORSINI, 16, WAS THERE SINCE 4:30 A.M., AND CAME WITH HER FATHER

and I love 'The Hunger Games,'" Sluka exclaimed.

The author of the celebrated series, Suzanne Collins, as well as the film's stars Jennifer Lawrence, Liam Hemsworth and Josh Hutcherson were all in New York yesterday. Lawrence was even discovered in Union Square by a talent scout when she was on vacation from Kentucky at age 14.

"I've read all three, and I'm here to meet the actors. I'm enjoying being out here with the kids and see them doing something wholesome and acting responsible."

BILL KEMPS, 64

Reviews leaked out yesterday, nearly all positive — Metro's own film critic called it "murderously good." (Read the entire review on page 13.)

The movie's plot revolves around the Hunger Games, where two children from every district in "Panem," the new North America in the book, are

forced to fight to the death. Only one survives.

Purchases to see "The Hunger Games" made up 92 percent of all movie ticket sales nationwide yesterday, ticket site Fandango reported.

And yes, it's already beating "Twilight."

"The Hunger Games" has sold more advance tickets than "Twilight" did in advance sales, according to Fandango.

"And there's two and a half days to go," pointed out Fandango spokesman Harry Medved.

In New York, 10 midnight showings are sold out at both the IMAX theater at Lincoln Center, Medved said, and at the Regal Union Square.

And at Lincoln Center, seven of those 10 showings, stacked at times like 12:01, 12:02 and 12:03, sold out last week.

City to reveal detailed 9/11 cancer data today

NEW YORK. Today the city is scheduled to release data detailing what types of cancers 321 cops have after responding to 9/11, as well as when they were diagnosed, Public Advocate Bill de Blasio said. De Blasio has been pushing Mayor Michael Bloomberg to release full data about the cancers, which 9/11 responders say is necessary to

prove their illnesses were caused by Ground Zero dust.

If the federal government decides the cancers are from 9/11, treatment would be covered under the Zadroga Act.

Bloomberg has promised the data but voiced concerns about privacy. De Blasio said they reached an agreement to reveal everything but officers' names. **METRO/AB**

ALISON BOWEN/METRO



Man arrested after Staten Island murder

ILLINOIS. NYPD officers arrested a man in Illinois in connection with the murder of a man celebrating his engagement. Antonio Lacertosa was stabbed to death Saturday morning at a Staten Island restaurant, reportedly after intervening in a fight between the eatery's employees and his brothers, who had been urinating outside.

Lacertosa was there celebrating his engagement with his fiancée. Police said that Redinel Dervishaj was found in Palo Hills, Ill., by cops and arrested. The New York Daily News called Dervishaj an "Albanian gangster," saying he was previously sought by cops when he allegedly was involved in a 2007 murder.

METRO/AB

Clean energy may come to one of New York's dirtiest spots

► NYC takes step to turn Fresh Kills into wind/solar energy farm ► Plans to turn former landfill into park

Clean energy is coming to what was once one of the dirtiest spots in New York City.

Yesterday, the city announced a request for proposals for the design and installation of solar and wind power facilities on the former Fresh Kills landfill on Staten Island. There are approximately 75 acres of land available for lease at the site.

If large-scale solar panels or wind turbines are built on those acres, they could generate up to 20 megawatts of renewable energy, enough to power roughly 6,000 homes,

according to officials.

Depending on the proposals the city receives, all of those homes may be located in Staten Island, or the energy produced could be sold back into the grid.

"If successful, (this) will more than double the renewable energy capacity in the city," said Deputy Mayor Cas Holloway yesterday.

Officials hope the installation of solar and wind power will help offset New York's voracious appetite for energy during the upcoming hottest days of summer, when every-

one in the city blasts air conditioners.

On days like those, the high demand for electricity forces the activation of "peaker" plants, which environmental experts say are not only inefficient, but also burn heavy fuel oil.

The sprawling, 2,200-acre Fresh Kills landfill, located on the western shore of Staten Island, served as the city's main solid-waste dumping ground until 2001, when it was closed. In 2006, the city started working on plans to convert all of those 2,200 acres into a park.



► Massive solar panels at Fresh Kills could generate enough energy to power 6,000 homes.

"Given that open space is at a premium in New York City, capped landfills offer unique potential for utility-scale solar and wind power."

CARTER STRICKLAND,
DEP COMMISSIONER

CARLY BALDWIN
carly.baldwin@metro.us

Eco-plans ahead

Yesterday's announcement is only the first of Mayor Michael Bloomberg's initiatives to expand renewable energy in New York City.

► The Planning Commission is currently reviewing changes to the zoning law that would allow 55-foot-high wind turbines to be built on top of buildings taller than 100 feet, according to a report in The New York Times.

► More wind turbines may also be built on industrial sites along the city's waterfront.

► The mayor is backing a proposal by the New York Power Authority to build a wind farm in the Atlantic Ocean, 13 miles off the coast of the Rockaways.

► Bloomberg has said he wants a 30 percent reduction in New York City's greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2030.



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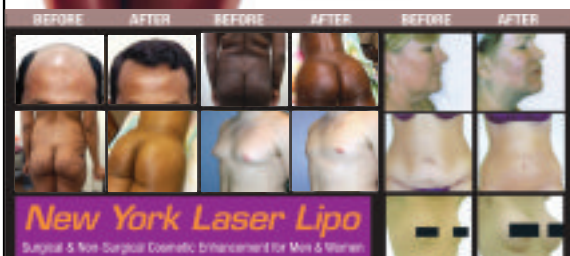


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Thief who blocks peepholes wanted

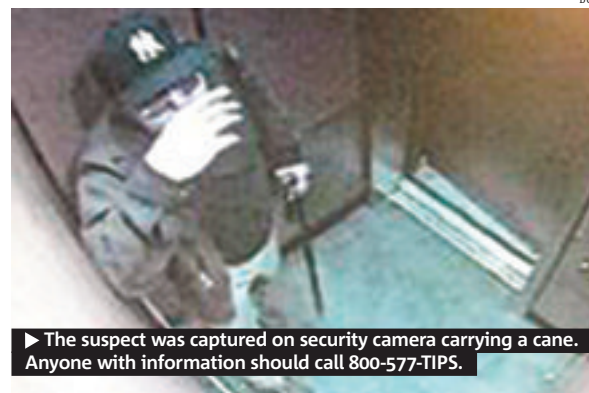
New York City police are looking for a prolific Manhattan burglar who they said wipes petroleum jelly over peepholes while thieving.

Police sent out an alert late Monday night, saying they are looking for a man wanted in a string of at least 14 burglaries in northern Manhattan neighborhoods like Hamilton Heights, Washington Heights and Inwood.

Before he breaks into an apartment — often using a crowbar — police say the suspect covers the peepholes of surrounding apartment doors in jelly. That's so that nobody can look out and identify him as he breaks in, according to the NYPD.

The robberies started in September and the most recent ones were on March 8, cops said.

Once inside the homes, the



► The suspect was captured on security camera carrying a cane. Anyone with information should call 800-577-TIPS.

suspect steals anything he can get his hands on, police said, ranging from cash and jewelry to laptops and iPods, clothing, cartons of cigarettes and once even a collection of bicentennial coins.

The suspect, a man, is described as 50 to 60 years old

with a dark complexion, close cut hair, and clean-shaven. He has been seen on a security camera carrying a cane, and wearing a Yankees baseball cap and dark glasses.

The robber has targeted apartments on streets like Riverside Drive, Cabrini Boule-

Four in one day

Most recently, on March 8, the man tried to break into four different apartments all in one day.

- At around 7 a.m. on March 8, he broke into an apartment on Fairview Avenue by forcing the door open and removed a laptop and clothing.
- A few hours later, sometime before 3 p.m. that same day, he broke into a home on Cabrini Boulevard and removed a carton of Marlboro cigarettes.
- He took an iPod and bicentennial coins from another apartment on Cabrini Boulevard.
- Finally, at about 2 p.m. he tried to break into an apartment on West 187th Street, but could not get in.

vard and Seaman Avenue.

He usually forces his way in by prying open locked apartment doors. Some of the robberies occurred at night, but others were in broad daylight.

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NYC Republican wins key third-party nod in Senate bid



New York's Conservative Party nominated a strong social and fiscal conservative, Wendy Long, as its Senate candidate on Monday — handing Long's Republican Party bid a significant boost but also threatening to divide Republican voters.

The endorsement from the small but influential party was a coveted prize sought by all three Republican candidates, who will face off in a June 26 primary.

The winner of that race will run as the GOP candidate in November against U.S. Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand.

Gillibrand was appointed to fill the Senate seat vacated in 2009 by Hillary Clinton, who was named Obama's secretary of state. The following year Gillibrand won a special election to fill the remainder of the term with a command-

ing 63 percent of the vote.

The two other Republican candidates who failed to get Monday's nomination are Rep. Bob Turner, who last year won an upset victory to fill New York City's congressional seat left vacant when Anthony Weiner resigned in a sex scandal, and Nassau County Comptroller George Maragos.

Turner's upset win last September against a well-known Democrat in a district where Democrats outnumber Republicans 3 to 1 garnered national headlines and was seen as a referendum on Obama's economic and foreign policies.

But the victory was short-lived: This month, the district became a casualty in the state's once-per-decade redrawing of district lines. It was only then that Turner decided to enter the Senate race.

REUTERS

Never heard of Wendy Long?

Long is a litigation attorney who lives with her family in New York City. She once clerked for Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, and describes herself as a committed conservative who would bring a clear contrast in a race against Gillibrand, whom she called

a "rubber-stamp" for President Barack Obama.

"I've got some news for the senator: she has maxed out her credit with New Yorkers and her Washington spending spree is about to end," said Long, adding that she would vote to repeal Obama's health care package, support tax cuts and would push for an overhaul of the country's energy policy. **REUTERS**

Voters unsure whom to back

A January poll by the Marist College Institute for Public Opinion found 44 percent of registered New York voters were unsure which candidate they would vote for in the upcoming Senate race.

Fewer than 4 in 10 registered voters said they would "definitely" back Gillibrand, while 18 percent said they planned to vote against her,

the poll found. Marist has not done a poll of the Republican field.

Republicans have not won a Senate race in New York since 1992, when Alfonse D'Amato narrowly beat Robert Abrams to earn a third term. D'Amato, however, lost his bid for a fourth term in 1998 to Sen. Charles Schumer.

REUTERS

"I think the best thing she's got going for her is that this will be a presidential election year."

MARIST POLLSTER LEE MIRINGOFF SAID OF GILLIBRAND'S CHANCES OF KEEPING THE SENATE SEAT

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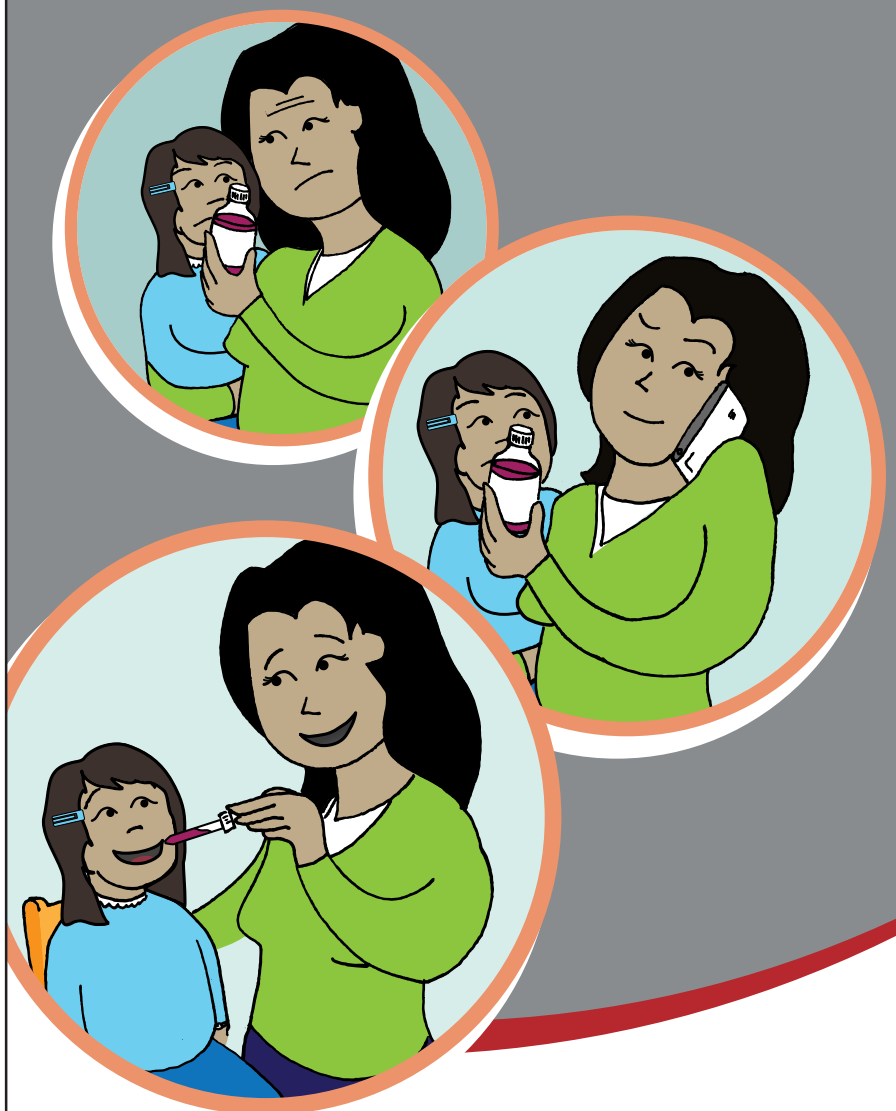


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Phone call sheds new light on death

The case of a black teenager shot dead by a white neighborhood watch captain — who has not yet been arrested — will go before a grand jury beginning April 10, Florida prosecutors said yesterday.

The office of state prosecutor Norm Wolfinger made the announcement as the victim's family lawyer said 17-year-old Trayvon Martin was on his cell phone with a girlfriend, giving her a chilling, minute-by-minute account of what was happening in the moments before he died.

Martin was unarmed and the case, which has been in the national media spotlight since the release of 911 emergency tapes last week, has fueled widespread public outrage.

The family lawyer, Ben Crump, said the girlfriend's testimony shed new light on the killing and would show that neighborhood watch captain George Zimmerman targeted Martin because he was black.



► A memorial sits where Martin was shot.

"This confirms that Trayvon Martin was killed only because he was a young black man who was profiled by Zimmerman," Crump told Reuters.

Phone records show the girl, who Crump would not identify because she is a minor, had been talking to Martin off and on all day and can provide convincing evidence that he was behaving normally, Crump said. **REUTERS**

Space tourism coming soon

CAPE CANAVERAL, FLA. The Obama administration is preparing for a space tourism industry that is expected to be worth \$1 billion in 10 years, the head of the FAA's commercial space office said yesterday. Rocket planes and spaceships to carry passengers beyond the atmosphere are being built and tested, with commercial flight services targeted to begin in 2013 or 2014. **REUTERS**

Microsoft wraps up Windows 8

REDMOND, WASH. Microsoft will finish work on Windows 8 this summer, setting the stage for personal computers and tablets with the operating system to go on sale around October, according to people with knowledge of the schedule. **BLOOMBERG**

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New iPad faces probe into overheating issue

An influential U.S. consumer watchdog is investigating online reports that Apple Inc.'s new iPad throws off an unusually large amount of heat.

Consumer Reports, which reviews everything from electronics to cars, noticed comments on online forums and on Apple's website about excessive heat from the new device, which went on sale Friday, and decided to look into the issue, a spokesman said.

The third iteration of the iPad hit store shelves on Friday and about 3 million units moved in the first three days, a record first weekend for the tablet computer, launched in 2010.

Hundreds of comments posted on an Apple support website centered on how the new iPad — which sports a larger battery than its predecessor to power a sharper "retina" display screen and other bells and whistles — could get uncomfortably warm. **REUTERS**



That's hot

► Apple's new iPad reached temperatures of **116 degrees** after 45 minutes of running

an intense action game, or up to 13 degrees hotter than the previous iPad under similar conditions, according to a test run by influential reviewer Consumer Reports.

Romney looks to Illinois primary



Front-runner Mitt Romney appeared poised to widen his lead in the Republican presidential race with a victory yesterday in Illinois, where polls show he has a comfortable edge over top rival Rick Santorum.

Romney hopes a solid win in Illinois will give him a fresh burst of momentum in the volatile campaign for the White House and persuade Republicans to rally around

the former Massachusetts governor and end an increasingly bitter nominating battle.

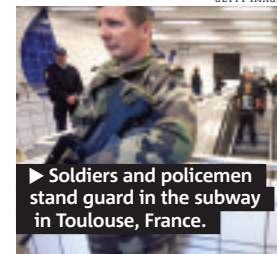
Romney has more than twice as many delegates to the nominating convention as Santorum, and his campaign has argued that his rivals cannot catch him in the race to pick a challenger to Democratic President Barack Obama in the Nov. 6 election. **REUTERS**

France fears repeat of tragic shooting as it emerges killer had video camera

French police stepped up the search yesterday for a gunman who filmed his carnage as he shot dead three children and a rabbi at a Jewish school, fearing the killer could strike again.

Officials believe the scooter-riding gunman is a trained marksman with "extremist" views who may also be responsible for last week's shootings of three soldiers of North African origin.

France's President Nicolas



► Soldiers and policemen stand guard in the subway in Toulouse, France.

Sarkozy has said racism appeared to be the motivation

for Monday's school attack, which came just five weeks before the first round of the presidential election.

Racist and anti-Semitic attacks are not uncommon in France, which is home to the largest Jewish and Muslim communities in Europe and has a history of attacks on both groups. Monday's shooting was the most deadly anti-Semitic attack in France in nearly 30 years. **REUTERS**

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GOP: Cut health care, taxes on rich

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Illinois Republicans voted yesterday and Mitt Romney won. Or he didn't; we don't really know at this point. But we do know that, whichever way the state goes, pundits are going to make all the predictable predictions: that the win (or loss) doesn't imply his inevitability (or that it does); that math will ultimately decide the nominee; that Romney is strong in urban centers but weak among rural conservatives; and probably, if we know our colleagues like we think we do, something about how he once strapped the family dog to the car roof for a long road trip.

Now that that's out of the way, let's discuss a far more important issue that's likely to play heavily in the upcoming November elections: yesterday's release of Republican

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Under Ryan's budget proposal, corporations and the rich would save some \$3 trillion in taxes through reductions in the top rate, among other regressive changes.

35% Meanwhile, seniors would pay more for health care, as federal Medicaid spending shrinks by more than 35 percent.



► Can Republican House Budget Chairman Paul Ryan convince voters that cuts to their health care are in their best interests?

House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan's budget proposal, which aims to reduce the U.S. deficit by walking back oversight of the financial sector, cutting social programs and lowering taxes on the most wealthy — all while increasing defense spending.

Ryan takes aim at all the classic Republican bugaboos. He urges, for instance, partial repeal of the Dodd-Frank financial regulations — passed following the 2008 mortgage collapse in an effort to prevent future crises. While many analysts worry these regulations don't go far enough, the right's strategy to righting our finances involves reverting to the deregulated financial environment that directly enabled this job-killing recession in the first place.

Another victim of the Ryan budget pen: poor seniors. Ryan proposes eliminating \$1.5 tril-

lion from the Affordable Care Act's health insurance fund; \$770 billion from Medicaid and related health programs; \$200 billion from Medicare; and \$1.8 trillion from the "other mandatory" column, which includes food stamps and tax credits for the poor. The Ryan budget, with strong Republican support, aims to fundamentally dismantle Medicare and gut safety net programs.

And what does Ryan propose we do with all the money saved from not assisting those most in need of assistance? Why, he wants to give it to those least in need, of course! His budget urges \$3 trillion in tax breaks for the nation's richest by lowering the top tax rate from 35 percent to 25 percent, among a handful of other regressive adjustments.

Oh yes, and Ryan aims to undo and invert "mandatory" defense spending cuts put in place following the supercommittee's failure last year to

reach bipartisan consensus in the debt ceiling debacle.

The Ryan budget proposal is pure political theater; there's even a surprise ending! As Robert McIntyre, director of Citizens for Tax Justice, points out: It doesn't even meet its own stated goals of deficit reduction. "He is proposing to increase the budget deficit over the long term," McIntyre concluded, pointing to vague loophole promises.

This all makes perfect sense. Paul Ryan isn't interested in fixing the economy. (That would make it more difficult for he and his party to claim the abject failure of President Barack Obama.) Ryan, like all politicians, is primarily interested in re-election and political point-scoring. It will be up to voters to determine who wins the points here.

Metro does not endorse the opinions of the author, or any opinions expressed on its pages.



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myentertainment

THE WORD



Metro's **Dorothy Robinson** shares her take on the world of gossip [@dorothyatmetro](#) dorothy.robinson@metro.us

2



The feed ...

► Checking in with some of Hollywood's biggest names to see what they've been up to — in their own words, in 140 characters or fewer.

Kathy Griffin is feeling indebted to Kal Penn, Chris Colfer is bad with pets, Diablo Cody is questioning others' parenting techniques, and Albert Brooks isn't jumping to conclusions.

@kathygriffin

Larry the dog got out & was missing ALL DAY! Got a call & WHO rescued him? @KalPenn! #Random #grateful

@chriscolfer

My goldfish have love handles. I may be over feeding them...

@AlbertBrooks

If it walks like a duck, looks like a duck, quacks like a duck, it still could be a chicken doing impressions.

@diablo Cody

Currently watching a dad TIE his daughter to a piece of playground equipment so she can't fall off. He's using police tape, which makes it extra weird.



Cody

Kim Zolciak: Don't be tardy to the OB-GYN

Kim Zolciak must be getting tired of **Jessica Simpson** stealing the blond-weave-wearing-pregnant-lady spotlight, as it was announced yesterday that she and husband **Kroy Biermann**, 26, are wasting no time expanding their family. After giving birth to their son, **Kroy Jagger (KJ) Jr.**, last May, *Life & Style* is exclusively reporting that the couple is expecting their second baby.

"Kroy and I are so excited," Kim, 33, tells the magazine. "To decide we wanted to get pregnant again and have it happen so quickly was such a blessing."

I'd go all conspiracy theorist on you and say Kim and Kroy (ed note: What the hell kind of name is "Kroy"? Is that a mash-up of "Kyle" and "Troy"?) are just now revealing this news to bring attention to the TV special about their lavish November wedding, "Don't Be Tardy for the Wedding," which premieres on April 26 at 9 p.m. on Bravo. But, come on: Anyone who films their wedding for reality TV and then calls it "Don't Be Tardy for the Wedding" will of course try to capitalize off of a pregnancy. There's no conspiracy about it.



► The new issue of *Life & Style* is on newsstands now.



Kutcher: To the moon!

Ashton Kutcher is going in-to orbit. Virgin mogul **Richard Branson** has revealed that the "Two and a Half Men" star is the 500th passenger to sign up for an upcoming Virgin Galactic flight. "I gave Ashton a quick call to congratulate and welcome him," Branson wrote on his blog. "He is as thrilled as we are at the prospect of being among the first to cross the final frontier (and back!) with us and to experience the magic of space for himself."

Now for the most pressing question: How much to keep him there?

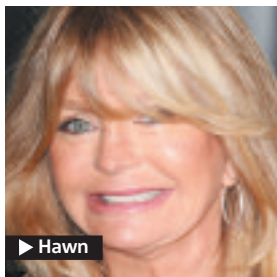
Talking points

Lohan is staying put

Lindsay Lohan is taking the "better safe than sorry" approach and is reportedly putting herself under house arrest for the remainder of her probation, according to TMZ. It's not a terribly long self-imposed sentence, though, as Lohan's probation is set to end March 29. But sources tell the website that the troubled actress is planning to only leave her house to go to her community service assignment at the morgue.

What is Hawn getting at?

Goldie Hawn set off a rash of speculation that daughter **Kate Hudson** has already secretly wed fiancé **Matt Bel-**



► Hawn

lamy when she told *ES* magazine, "When my daughter Kate married an English rock star it didn't worry me." But Hawn doesn't stand by the quote. When a Twitter follower asked her, "So are Kate and Matt really married, or are the press twisting your words?" Hawn responded, "Darling, once again twisted the words. They aren't married."

Cowell addresses Spears rumors

Despite all the rumors



Vergara can be bipolar around us all she wants.

about negotiating with **Britney Spears** to come onboard as a judge, **Simon Cowell** may have different plans for the U.S. edition of "The X Factor" — and they involve canceling the show altogether. "I'd rather fall off the cliff on numbers than deteriorate slowly," Cowell said at a press conference for the launch of another season of "Britain's Got Talent." "We have something in development which could replace 'The X Factor.'"

Vergara on dating Latina women

Sofia Vergara has some advice for any men considering dating Latina women: Get used to some ups and downs. "There's always a lot going on," Vergara tells *Esquire*. "[My boyfriend] wonders how I can get really mad and scream, then turn around, do something, come back, and forget that I was mad. I'm, like, bipolar."



Nicki Minaj pops up in Japan and other colorful characters for your Wednesday

1. Musician and singer Esperanza Spalding left the "Late Show with David Letterman" taping at the Ed Sullivan Theater on Monday in New York City.

2. Singer Nicki Minaj arrived at Narita International Airport on Tuesday in Narita, Japan.

3. An assistant of Madame Tussaud prepared the **Justin Bieber** wax figure for its unveiling at Madame Tussauds Berlin on Monday.

4. Tim McGraw performed with his wife **Faith Hill** at Rod Laver Arena on Tuesday in Melbourne, Australia.

5. Liam Hemsworth (what a jacket!) popped up at the Canadian premiere of "The Hunger Games" at Scotiabank Theatre on Monday in Toronto, Canada.

6. Actor-honoree Daniel Dae Kim attended "Legacy And Homecoming," the Pan Asian Repertory's 35th Anniversary Gala, at the Edison Ballroom in New York City on Monday.

7. New dad Hugh Grant was spotted arriving at BBC Radio 1 on Tuesday in London.

1: RAY TAMARRA/FILMMAGIC
2: JUN SATO/WIREIMAGE
3: TARGET PRESSE AGENTUR GMBH/GETTY IMAGES
4: SCOTT BARBOUR/GETTY IMAGES
5: GEORGE PIMENTEL/WIREIMAGE
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Get up on the download

► Check out the offerings from Nintendo and PS3 that you can purchase from the comfort of your couch ► Who needs the outside world anyway?

Did you know that you can buy video games now without leaving the house? Celebrate the dawning of a new, slovenly age by checking out these two new, download-only releases.

'Dillon's Rolling Western'

Console: 3DS

Company: Nintendo

Grade: ●●●●●

Nintendo's eShop has been quietly picking up steam late-

Sidescroller



LAWRENCE BONK

LAWRENCE.BONK@METRO.US

Metro does not endorse the opinions of the author, or any opinions expressed on its pages.

ly. Great titles like "Mutant Mudds," "Pushmo" and "Sakura Samurai" keep releasing at a rapid clip. The shop does not



► "Dillon's Rolling Western"

have the myth and majesty of "Angry Birds" (yet) but it does have an armadillo sheriff who rolls over enemies with furi-

ous thunder. Welcome to the world of "Dillon's Rolling Western."

The title marries the zany exploration of Nintendo games with that favorite of Web browsers everywhere, the tower defense genre. You still set up turrets to fend off advancing hordes of baddies, but you also get in the ring and fend them off yourself. It's great fun, even though the battle controls can be confusing. Such is life.

'Journey'

Console: PS3

(Available only on PSN)

Company: thatgamecompany

Grade: ●●●●●

The trial to decide whether or not video games can be considered art just received another stellar character witness. Enter "Journey," one of the most beautiful and meditative games to grace the form. Take that, plaintiff Ebert.

"Journey" features none of the tropes that are staples of gaming. There isn't a

score. There are no stats of any kind and there is no way to die. You simply wander the desert slowly making your way toward a faraway mountain. There are puzzles to solve and an ingenious hop-on/hop-off multiplayer system.

Occasionally your world "merges" with someone else who is playing and you two anonymous souls join up for a while before parting ways. That might be a statement on the frailty of human connection, or it might just be a cool game mechanic.



► Immortality is yours in "Journey."

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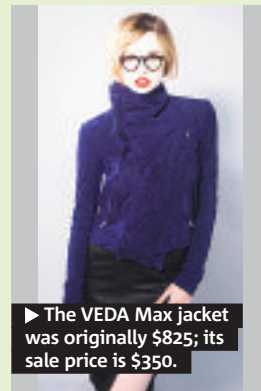
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Events and openings

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► Evolving Habitat naturally shed deer antlers, \$110-\$250 at Artists & Fleas

will include tailoring service.
Saturday and Sunday, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.
156 Ludlow St.
Call 646-448-4925 to set up an appointment.

Artists & Fleas at Chelsea Market

Williamsburg's weekly indoor market for artists, indie designers and vintage collectors will set up at Chelsea Market for a three-month residency. Free-to-the-public workshops include one on repurposing vintage trends.
www.artistsandfleas.com

BCBG's most-wanted

Shoppers in all BCBG locations will celebrate spring by sipping champagne while enjoying 20 percent off on all regularly priced merchandise. Those who spend more than \$250 will receive a special gift.
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Sephora + Pantone Universe Pop-up

This spring is all about embracing color, so Sephora and Pantone collaborated on a new collection and one colorful pop-up shop to show you how to work bright hues. At the store, shoppers receive color advice and application tips like how to wear 2012's color of the year: Tangerine Tango.
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HUNGER GAMES: MURDEROUSLY GOOD

► 'The Hunger Games' boasts plenty of action and a show-stealing performance by Jennifer Lawrence as heroine Katniss Everdeen

'The Hunger Games'

Director: Gary Ross

Cast: Jennifer Lawrence, Josh Hutcherson, Woody Harrelson

Rating: PG-13

Grade: **A-**

Sure, it's based on a wildly popular book series with a love triangle as one of its central conflicts and legions of devoted teenage — and adult — fans, but to call "The Hunger Games" the next "Twilight" is reductive and dismissive, and doesn't do the sci-fi dystopia justice. And the film adaptation is no different. Whereas those pesky vampire films rate from laughably bad to boring, the first "Hunger Games" film — deftly directed by Gary Ross

and anchored by a fantastic performance from Jennifer Lawrence — is high quality.

Ross' shaky-cam glimpse into a grubby, post-failed-revolution future is equal parts fantastical and grounded, with the violence of the films' titular kiddie gladiator contest shockingly realistic — pushing the upper edges of the PG-13 rating — driving home the brutality young Katniss (Lawrence) is facing. And it's Lawrence, imbuing young adult fantasy with the same grit and heart that earned her an Oscar nomination for "Winter's Bone," who makes the movie.

NED EHRBAR

METRO WORLD NEWS IN LOS ANGELES

MURRAY CLOSE



► Katniss Everdeen (Jennifer Lawrence) suited up for the games.

TV watch list



► David Walton stars as Pete and Amanda Peet as Alex in "Bent."

VIVIAN ZINK/NBC

'Bent'

COMEDY. An uptight single mom (Amanda Peet) hires a goofy surfer dude contractor (David Walton) to renovate her home. Snappy banter and chemistry are set in place quicker than new kitchen tiles, but missed deadlines only add to the will they/won't they dynamic of this charming sitcom. Series premiere, 9 p.m., NBC

'Duck Dynasty'

REALITY. A clan of duck call and decoy makers look like ZZ Top, make millions off of their wares in the backwoods of Louisiana. Series premiere, 10 p.m., A&E

'Rip the Runway'

SPECIAL. Hip-hop meets fashion — and whatever you'd call Lil'

Kim's getup — in the 2012 edition of this music-focused fashion show. Robin Thicke and Wade also perform. 10 p.m., BET

'Happy Endings'

COMEDY. Dave gets bullied at the gym. Well, he's in the right place to learn how to fight back. 9:31 p.m., ABC

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Getting into the 'Games'

With the big-screen adaptation of "The Hunger Games" hitting theaters Friday, we were amped to channel our inner Katniss with a warrior-esque workout at New York Sports Clubs' new "Train Like a Tribute" class. The rigorous routine is 45 minutes of cardio and weights that'll get your body in shape for the four skills necessary for all Tributes:

Class info

► **NYSC, 86th and Lexington with Eric Salvador Tuesdays at noon March 27 through the end of April**
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archery, tree climbing, speed work and strength training. At the start of the class, you'll sprint to the Cornucopia (yep, they made a real Cornucopia) for supplies like weights, mats and archery bows, and then compete with fellow class-goers in circuit training exercises — all while evading threats from the Gamemakers (instructors), like Tracker Jacker attacks and mutant dog chases. The class is free for members and non-members alike, but if you can't make it to the gym, try these moves at home.

1 Peeta Press: Position dumbbells to each side of shoulders with elbows below wrists. Press dumbbells upward until arms are extended overhead. Lower to sides of shoulders and



► Master trainers Eric Salvador and Fawn Cronin demo some of the moves you'll do in New York Sports Clubs' "Hunger Games"-inspired "Train Like a Tribute" workout.

repeat. Complete four sets: First 12 reps, then 10, then eight, then six.

2 Capitol Crunches: Lying flat on your back with a weight overhead and arms straight, lift

your upper body to a seated position with arms overhead. Keep legs extended flat on the ground the entire time. Core movements are critical for tree climbers, who spend time twisting and turning while ascending the tree. Complete three sets of 10.

3 Katniss Kickbacks: Step forward with the leg opposite of the arm performing this move. Bend forward at the

waist, and keep back parallel to ground. With the dumbbell in a neutral hand position (halfway between pronated and supinated), the elbow of the arm in use should be at a 90 degree angle to the ground. Extend the weight up and away from the body, creating a straight line of 10.

MEREDITH ENGEL
meredith.engel@metro.us



► Weil

A meet and greet with a treat for your feet

Get some face time with renowned natural physician Dr. Andrew Weil on Tuesday at the Bryant Park Hotel (40 W. 40th St.). He'll be extolling the benefits of daily 30-minute walks, plus teaching how the feet work and how you can properly choose a pair of shoes. Dr. Weil will be joined by podiatrist Phillip Vasyli of Vasyli footwear, which has partnered with the physician for the new Dr. Weil Integrative Footwear line. Swing by at 11 a.m. for a welcome tea reception before discussion starts at 11:30.

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► Gunnar Peterson

Want Christina Hendricks' hourglass figure?

Gunnar Peterson is personal trainer to J. Lo and Kim Kardashian, so he knows about curves. Here are his tips.

She doesn't stress over her weight:

"Weight is arbitrary. Go by feel. Work on being honest and analytical, as opposed to critical, when it comes to your body. If you stick with your food and exercise plan, you'll eventually get to where you need to be."

She works out with her husband:

"Some people need someone to hold them accountable, others need someone to keep them engaged. If you find someone who is dependable, pleasant to be around and has the same attitude vis-a-vis exercise, then it's more fun."

She breaks food rules:

"Indulging from time to time keeps the resentment at bay as well as de-emphasizes the food that you're indulging in. Your diet can vary, but when you find something that works nutritionally as well as leaves you feeling good, you can stick with it until you burn out on it." ● ROMINA MCGUINNESS



"Mad Men" hottie Christina Hendricks likes to work out with her hubby, Geoffrey Arend.



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Letters

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Fables don't lead to good US policy

RE: "PEOPLE FEAR BIBLE BECAUSE IT'S TRUE!": People don't fear the Bible, they fear those who blindly follow it. Knowing that the votes of people such as Mr. Vogenitz (who are influenced by religion and its fables) count just as much as the votes of persons who base their choices on facts and science is truly terrifying.

ROBERT LA ROSA, WHITESTONE

Calls for a kinder, fairer discourse

RE: "PRESIDENT OBAMA IS A RADICAL LIBERAL THUG?": In response to John Bevan's rant, I just want to say that you sound like a man whose radical yourself. You make it seem as if President Obama is in his Oval Office laughing as everyone goes jobless and

has to fight in the streets for food and water! As if in the last four years he has done nothing but make this country worse! It is your thuggish opinions that make me wonder if any president will ever be good enough to sustain this country's worst citizen.

ASHLEY ALLARD, JERSEY CITY

Obama a radical thug? Where were you when that radical conservative thug Bush got over 4,000 Americans killed in a war based on a lie? Remember Iraq? You talk about the president being a divider. The Republican house has been doing a good job of that the past two years.

ANTHONY YOUNG, VIA E-MAIL

I understand why Metro publishes letters from trolls better suited to the comment pits of YouTube: Everyone

gets outraged and writes in, and thus the letters section becomes self-propagating. Assisting in the polarization of American politics is good business sense, I guess. But pandering for letters is one thing. Publishing actual hate speech goes beyond the pale. I hope you are not aware of the infamous history of the phrase "work shall make you free," as ignorance is the least-distasteful explanation of how that letter made it to print. "Arbeit macht frei" was the slogan over the gates of Auschwitz. Giving a nut a megaphone to declare that President Obama is Hitler and his supporters are assisting in their own genocide is absolutely unacceptable.

DAVID LEISK, ASTORIA

Everybody, can we please try to stop generalizing? If you

find yourself describing "liberals," "conservatives," "Christians," "Republicans," "Democrats," etc. as being or believing one thing or another, take a step back and just realize that you're probably in the wrong. You don't need labels to describe your opinion on a topic, so why stereotype? Just let your opinion on a subject speak for itself.

COLLIN WAID, VIA E-MAIL

Honestly people, no matter who is president, those who did not vote for the president will be on the offensive. We saw it for eight years under Bush. With the obvious being stated, I say we try something radical: Let's take the good with the bad and work together to make our country a better place. And let's stop bashing opinions in the Metro. Let's try bringing up new ideas to educate your fellow readers. We all know that a country divided cannot prosper, so imagine how great America could be if we truly worked together. **MARY-VIRGINIA SALZANO, VIA E-MAIL**

Horoscope

♈ Aries March 21-April 19. Don't be surprised if more than one person confides in you without you or them knowing why. They'll simply feel impelled to tell you things that they wouldn't tell anybody else.

♉ Taurus April 20-May 20. It may not be smart to push for certain things, such as matters that affect your material affairs, if you sense the timing is bad. Listen to what your instincts are telling you.

♊ Gemini May 21-June 20. Instead of going with the flow as you normally might do, you are likely to be determined to focus on one specific goal. It'll be for a worthy purpose.

♋ Cancer June 21-July 22. Pay attention and you could learn something important by observing how another conducts him or herself in a development that is similar to one you will soon face.

♌ Leo July 23-Aug. 22. Being fortunate enough to be in the right place at the right time will make you privy to some advance information concerning something profitable that is about to go down. Use it with discretion.

♍ Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22. Someone you respect who has counseled you correctly in the past is the same person you should go to again if you're having a problem making another

critical decision.

♎ Libra Sept. 23-Oct. 23. Any idea you get that you think might help your work or career is best kept to yourself, at least until you are absolutely certain you would be able to successfully pull it off.

♏ Scorpio Oct. 24-Nov. 22. Try to distinguish between being protective and being possessive regarding a loved one. If the leash is held too tightly, it could become a choke chain.

♐ Sagittarius Nov. 23-Dec. 21. An important development can be finalized to your satisfaction, provided that you are tenacious and persistent. Don't settle for second-best.

♑ Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19. If there is something important that you need to do, get it out of the way as early in the day as possible. If you wait until you're pushed into it, you may do a rotten job.

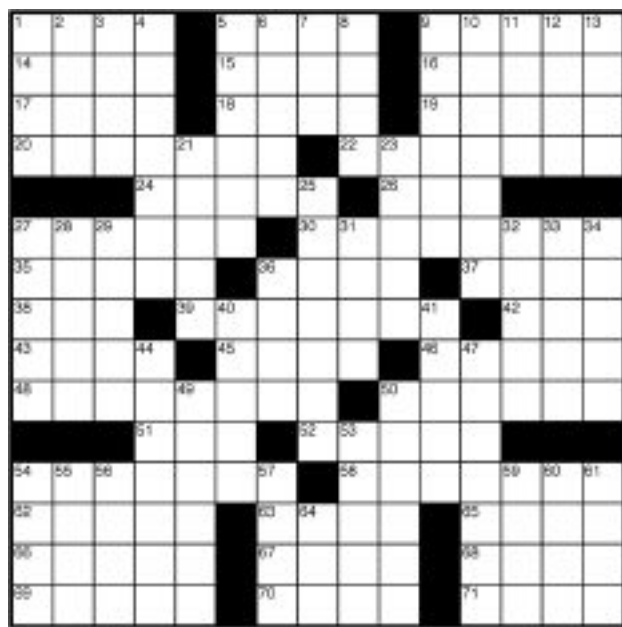
♒ Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 19. Take some time to study and review your financial position. Something that would save or make you more money could come out of a close, meticulous study.

♓ Pisces Feb. 20-March 20. Any favors you do for others aren't likely to be repaid immediately. However, when they are, there is a chance you'll get more in return than you gave. **BERNICE BEDE OSOL**

Across

- 1 Woman from Bonn
- 5 Jazz genre
- 9 Filter
- 14 Van Gogh medium
- 15 Boathouse items
- 16 Left over
- 17 "Rhyme Pays" rapper (hyph.)
- 18 "Wish me ___!"
- 19 Gauge
- 20 Word-related
- 22 Looked down on
- 24 Violin parts
- 26 Diligent insect
- 27 Dr. Scholl product
- 30 Deteriorated
- 35 Wet behind the ears
- 36 Portuguese melody
- 37 Tenderfoot
- 38 Banned bug spray
- 39 Cat color
- 42 Relatives
- 43 Horses do it
- 45 Sturdy trees
- 46 Builds an appetite
- 48 Usurp
- 50 Frothy dessert
- 51 A thousand G's
- 52 Castles, in chess
- 54 Baroque composer
- 58 Mode
- 62 Change a bill
- 63 Flaky
- 65 Length times width
- 66 Galahad's weapon
- 67 Ess molding
- 68 Night crawler
- 69 Done with
- 70 Chieftain
- 71 Bellow

- Down**
- 1 Thwart a villain
 - 2 Wedding confetti
 - 3 Writer ___ Haley
 - 4 Poirot portrayer
 - 5 Comfort
 - 6 Make watertight
 - 7 Electric bridge
 - 8 Clucks
 - 9 Slot-machine fruits
 - 10 Put forth effort
 - 11 Business letter abbr.
 - 12 Subarctic tribe
 - 13 Like a rock
 - 21 Media star
 - 23 Sing door-to-door
 - 25 More posh
 - 27 Hindu god of rain
 - 28 Consumer advocate
 - 29 Ralph ___
 - 31 Probabilities
 - 32 Microwaves
 - 33 Touches up
 - 34 No rocket scientist
 - 36 Decree
 - 40 Explorer ___ Amundsen
 - 41 Cuddly creatures of Endor
 - 44 Gothic ___
 - 47 Cradlesong start
 - 49 Applied gold leaf
 - 50 Like a castle
 - 53 Proposal
 - 54 Forum farewell
 - 55 Statuesque model
 - 56 Peddle
 - 57 Megacelebrity
 - 59 Latin hymn word
 - 60 Yvette's eye
 - 61 Part of NBC
 - 64 Back when



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SUDOKU LEVEL: EASY

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1				7	8		4	2
4	8		6			9		

SUDOKU LEVEL: HARD

Solution to yesterday's crossword



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3

In the news

Cabrera out

Miguel Cabrera will be out at least a week, and maybe longer, after breaking a bone under his eye.

Cabrera, adjusting to playing third base after the Tigers signed Prince Fielder, took a bad hop to the face in a game Monday.

The ball hit Cabrera's sunglasses and caused a cut that required eight stitches. The good news is that Cabrera says he is having no problems with his vision.

What went right ...

1 Bench players — The Knicks' bench did a little bit of everything as they helped extend or maintain leads anytime they were inserted. The reserves didn't just produce points, they played solid defense against their bench counterparts and even extended a third-quarter lead against most of Toronto's starters.

2 Little help? — The Raptors only have two players who can be considered "stars" and they were the only ones to produce. Other than Andrea Bargnani and DeMar DeRozan, Toronto had nobody else to pick up the slack.

3 Hustlers — The Knicks were publicly knocked for admitting what everyone else already knew, that they lacked a sustained energy throughout the season that resulted in Mike D'Antoni's resignation. Since Woodson took the reigns, the Knicks have come to life. They're playing great help defense — even Carmelo Anthony. ● **METRO/TW**



► Forward Amar'e Stoudemire, center, dominated on both ends of the court. He had 22 points and 12 rebounds in the win.

Going streaking

► Knicks have now won four straight with new coach ► Team cruises to 106-87 win over Raptors ► Four of five starters score in double figures

The Knicks continued their resurgence with a convincing 106-87 win over the struggling Raptors.

The Knicks (22-24), in much the same manner in which they've won their previous three games, used a stifling defense, renewed energy and unselfish play to knock off the Raptors (15-31). Leading the way for New York was Jeremy

15 Amar'e Stoudemire had his 15th double-double of the season. He led the team in both scoring and rebounding.

Lin, as he tallied 18 points and 10 assists, while committing only three turnovers.

Lin wasn't alone, as Amar'e

Stoudemire experienced a bit of a revival as the struggling power forward shook off his personal malaise. Stoudemire, who's battled both physical and emotional stress this season, was as lively and engaged as he's been at any time this season. He finished with game highs of 22 points and 12 rebounds, including a double-double by the time the fourth

quarter began.

The Raptors fell behind by 16 points midway through the third quarter, but cut the deficit to five midway through the fourth. But the Knicks upped the lead back to double digits minutes later, on the strength of a 15-3 run.

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PG Davis out second game

Backup point guard Baron Davis missed his second straight game last night with a right hamstring strain.

Davis injured the hamstring in last Friday's home game against the Pacers. And while he returned to practice the next day, he sat out Saturday in Indiana.

"We've just got to wait on him. We're not going to rush him," interim head coach Mike Woodson said after yesterday's




shootaround. "He's a big part of what we do."

Davis has become an even bigger

part of the Knicks since Woodson took over. Woodson reiterated over the weekend that Jeremy Lin would continue to start, but Davis had been playing well since his return from a back injury Feb. 20.

He is averaging 4.8 points and 5.2 assists in 17.3 minutes per game. He has had at least seven assists five times. ● **METRO**




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Tortorella fires back at DeBoer

Rangers coach John Tortorella isn't used to having his thunder stolen by the opposing coach in postgame press conferences.

But after Monday night's win over the Devils it was Devils coach Peter DeBoer who stole all the headlines, saying of Tortorella, "He's either got short-term memory loss or he's a hypocrite," after Tortorella was angered by DeBoer setting up a fight to start the game.

Tortorella's response at practice yesterday?

"Shut up."

The two teams have engaged in an increasingly heated series this season. Both will make the playoffs barring a collapse by New Jersey and they split the season series 3-3.

"I think Peter needs to jog his memory as far as the starting lineups that I've put in in his building," Tortorella said. "And really, basically,



► Tortorella

just shut up. And I need to also."

Tortorella didn't take his own advice. He was none too happy with the three brawls that broke out as the puck dropped Monday night.

"I think the situation [Monday] night was disrespectful to players, and I think we took a backwards step," he said.

"Fighting's part of the game; it's a big part of the game, but it doesn't need to be manufactured," Tortorella said.

You can bet it won't be if they meet in the postseason.

● METRO

Jeter still out with injury

► Shortstop has been out a week with stiffness in left leg ► Won't play until Friday at the earliest ► Girardi stresses there is no reason to worry

The Yankees' 37-year-old shortstop may be showing his age.

Derek Jeter hasn't played in a week and he'll continue to be kept out with a left calf injury. He didn't play yesterday and manager Joe Girardi said he won't play today or tomorrow either.

"Today he said he didn't feel it," Girardi told reporters in camp yesterday. "There's no rush. Hopefully we'll get him in there Friday. I don't want it to be an issue."

Jeter had stiffness in his right calf last season, so the Yankees plan to be cautious in bringing their captain back.

On Friday, Jeter said the injury was "not that big of an issue," but he had originally planned to return to the lineup last night.

"Just sore, nothing out of



► Jeter and Girardi both say there's "no rush" to return.

the ordinary I don't think," Jeter said after Friday's game.

There's not much to take from spring training statistics, but Jeter is a respectable five-of-18 with two runs scored in seven games so far this spring.

Girardi told reporters that if this were the regular season

he could be playing.

It's not unusual for veterans like Jeter to not travel for road trips, which is one reason he won't play Thursday in Fort Meyers against Boston.



MARK OSBORNE
mark.osborne@metro.us

Yankees notes

A brief look at what is going on in Yankees camp:

- Robinson Cano, who was hit in the left hand by a pitch on Sunday, returned to the lineup last night.
- If you trust Russell Martin, Andy Pettitte may be the best pitcher in camp. Pettitte threw his first bullpen session since his revocation of retirement. "That's as good a bullpen as I've caught all spring," Martin said.
- The starter who could be the odd man out thanks to the return of Pettitte, Freddy Garcia, threw a bullpen session for the first time yesterday after he was hit by a line drive on the hand. He reported there was "no pain."

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Peyton dons a Denver jersey

Peyton Manning raised up an orange Broncos jersey yesterday and ushered in a new chapter. Tim Tebow's chapter, not even half-written, is officially over.

"I'm very excited to begin the next chapter of my playing career with the Denver Broncos," Manning said.

Manning inked a five-year, \$96 million deal Tuesday with Denver. He'll reportedly make \$18 million for the 2012 season and retain his trademark No.

\$96M

Manning signed a five-year deal worth \$96 million. It has a clause that could void it after next season if he fails a physical to give the Broncos some protection.

18 jersey. There is an injury clause in the contract, which protects the Broncos in case



GETTY IMAGES

Manning's neck isn't 100 percent. He has 10 days to pass a team physical and if he re-injures it during the 2013 season, the Broncos are off the books in 2014.

"I realize I don't have 14 years left, by any means," Manning said. "This isn't something where I'm just building a foundation to do something in two years or three years. This is a 'now' situation. We're going to do whatever we can to win right now. That's all I'm think-

ing about right now."

Denver is attempting to trade Tebow and Jacksonville, Green Bay, Miami and the New York Jets have all inquired about his services.

ESPN reported the Jets "are a long shot at best," according to a league source. In a conference call to announce the signing of LaRon Landry yesterday general manager Mike Tannenbaum wouldn't comment on Tebow, but said the team was set at quarterback. ● METRO

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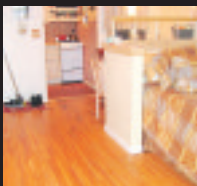
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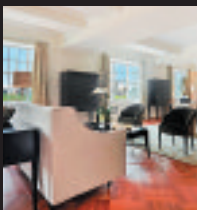
Market watch



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The cheapest property listed this week is a one-bedroom unit at 521 E. 88th St. This pre-war co-op with laundry in the building is listed by Prince Real Estate for \$239,000.



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3 Tips to seal the deal

► Spring sees the real estate market abuzz with buyers and sellers out to get the best deal — without having to compromise on what matters most to them ► We asked two industry insiders for tips on coming out on top

A good broker is key

"Finding a smart broker is essential," says Boston-based realtor Maggie Gold Seelig. "They educate buyers about the market. Each city has its own rhythm. The broker must know the neighborhood and the comparables, or you'll miss opportunities." Comparables are used to determine a property's fair market value via comparing similar recently sold properties

in the area. Because a home might have unique qualities or fixtures, though, comparables are only a guide.

Keep your cool

When it comes down to the actual negotiations, it's important to keep things impersonal and amicable.

"Whether you're a buyer or seller, never take anything personally," says HGTV's "Selling

New York" cast member Tom Postilio, who heads New York real estate firm CORE. "It's such an emotional purchase. Remove yourself. [Remember] it's business. It's about numbers."

Negotiations shouldn't fixate on price

"There are levers outside of price," says Seelig, "like closing dates and time frames, which



► Keep it friendly and play cool in negotiations, says Postilio.

might be more important to the seller than holding out on price. For sellers, perhaps there's something you can include to sweeten the deal for the buyer. Always remember to leave something on the table for the other side. The seller and buyer have to feel good about the deal. Never close a door — have a conversation."



LINDA LABAN
linda.laban@metro.us

Deal in gridlock?

HGTV's Tom Postilio has advice for both sides:

Sellers should ask:

"Is this the best deal I'm going to get? How long do I want to hold out for?"

Sellers shouldn't:

"Negotiate with anyone whose finances are not in

order. If they're not pre-approved, they must [at least] look like strong candidates."

Buyers should ask:

"Can I live happily without this house?"

Buyers shouldn't:

"Leave financing too late. Today with all the hoops the banks make people jump through, pre-approval can take a bit longer."

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Becoming pickier purchasers

► Today's condo amenities are less sexy, more functional ► With buyers more attuned to construction shortcomings, new condos opt for substance over style with practical and energy-efficient amenities

While New York's new development condo market is improving, most developers are not quite ready to bring sexy back. That's because, unlike boom-time buyers, those in the market for new development units today are more concerned about functionality than flashy amenities.

During the flush times of the mid-2000s, new condo buyers sought out brand-name, high-end appliances, along with jaw-dropping amenities and niche details. Now, they are much more intent on making sure fixtures actually work the way they're supposed to. And because today's buyers are more educated than ever, they

can easily spot the difference between flash and substance.

Thomas Elliott, executive vice president at El-Ad Group, the developer of Tribeca condo 250 West St., says potential buyers are "picking apart" everything from appliances to "sound attenuation."

This pickiness is due not only to the recession, but to the myriad, well-publicized lawsuits that have hit new condos in recent years — a prime example is prolific developer Shaya Boymelgreen, who built more than 2,400 apartments during the boom only to face some 30 lawsuits from buyers complaining of shoddy construction. Buyers are well-

versed in these lawsuits, experts say, and are now paying close attention to features like flooring and insulation.

This month, The Real Deal asked experts what's changed inside new rental and condo buildings since the market crashed. Here are the features today's buyers view with skepticism, and how developers have reimagined them to make their projects more appealing.

LUCY COHEN BLATTER

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Flooring fixation

These days, many New York City developers are “doing 100 percent, all-hardwood floors,” says Nancy Ruddy, founding principal of the architecture and interior design firm Cetra/Ruddy.

That may not sound revolutionary, but it’s a significant change from the mid-2000s, when pre-engineered floors — made primarily of plywood and topped with only a thin layer of hardwood — gained popularity



due to their lower price and speedy installation process.

And while walnut and other “exotic” woods were popular during the boom, buyers have now discovered that “in the Northeastern climate, the best wood to use is oak, which is harder than others,” Ruddy says. Nowadays, she says, developers are using oak more often, and experimenting with different plank widths, finishes and patterns rather than different types of wood.

Washer-dryers

Unvented washer-dryers became the norm in many luxury condos in the mid-2000s. These appliances, which run on



electricity instead of gas, were popular because they’re inexpensive for developers and stackable (a space-saving touch).

But unvented dryers also take much longer to actually dry clothes, and therefore require more energy, Ruddy says. As a result, buyers quickly became disenchanted with them.

These days, home-seekers demand traditional, vented washer-dryers.

Ventilation ducts must be carried up through the building

to the roof, which means they’re costlier for developers and buyers. Still, an increasing number of high-end developers are now putting vented washer-dryers in, Ruddy says.

And, as more families choose to stay in the city rather than move to the suburbs, Ruddy says she now sees laundry rooms within apartments. The new Georgica condominium on the UES, for example, has laundry/utility rooms with side-by-side Bosch washer-dryers.

Getting heated

During the boom, many developers installed heating and air-conditioning systems in which two rooms shared one pump, Ruddy says.

But most buyers didn’t realize that this makes it easy for sound to travel.

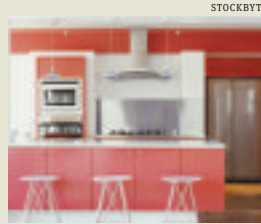
“Any good architect would tell their client that two rooms should never share one unit,” she says. Now, developers simply can’t get away with two-for-one heating systems, she says.

The kitchen sink

When it comes to kitchen appliances, labels are declining in importance, says Eran Chen of ODA Architecture. “Luxury brands were all the rage during the boom,” he says. “It was all about the name-dropping.”

Now, buyers are more interested in getting the most for their money.

While popular brands — like Viking and Miele — are still expected in many new condo kitchens, Ruddy says she’s seen fewer “auxiliary appliances,”



like vegetable steamers built into countertops, and more “basic” ones instead. Meanwhile, there is more demand for the appliance “column,” which consolidates small appliances, she says.

Windows

Floor-to-ceiling windows were a well-known signature of boom-time condos. But the buyers of these apartments quickly realized that there are downsides: Floor-to-ceiling windows mean units get hotter in the summer and colder in the winter.

“Even if it’s a super-high-performance glass, when you have sunlight on your skin, it feels hotter, which means you have to run the A/C higher in the summer,” says Dan Kaplan, a senior partner at architectural firm FX-



FOWLE. “And in the winter, glass isn’t as good an insulator as solid materials, so you have to use more heat.”

As a result, New York City is seeing fewer new developments with wall-to-wall windows, and

more opaque and glazed areas, according to Kaplan.

“It’s nice to have places with in the apartment with floor-to-ceiling windows,” he says. “But too much is like a whole meal of foie gras.”

Developers are paying a lot of attention to windows in general these days, says El-Ad’s Eliott.

“We make sure we have sophisticated, soundproof windows,” he says. “At 250 West, we have triple-panes on the windows facing the West Side Highway.”

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